

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 01309 150802Z

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ACTION AF-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-05 RSC-01 DRC-01 /013 W

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R 141606Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2792

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LAGOS 1309

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, NI

SUBJ: ENERGY: PETROCHEMICAL TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR

REF: LAGOS 1181

1. SEMINAR IDEA DISCUSSED JANUARY 23 WITH WILLIAM J. MOFFATT, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS MANAGER, CHEMICO (212/239-5100), AND FEBRUARY 13 WITH KENNETY A. DEGHETTO, CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FOSTER WHEELER LIMITED (UK), AND H.T. FIELDING, VICE PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL SALES FOR FOSTER WHEELER WORLDWIDE (713/622-7100). NONE OF THESE EXECUTIVES WAS PREVIOUSLY AWARE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PROPOSAL.

2. THEIR REACTIONS WERE VERY SIMILAR: THEY NOTED THAT DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE MISSIONS WERE USUALLY INTENDED TO INTRODUCE US FIRMS TO NEW MARKETS, BUT IN THIS INSTANCE, THEY AND ALL THEIR MAJOR COMPETITORS HAD ALREADY INVESTIGATED POSSIBILITIES IN NIGERIA, AND MANY WERE NOW UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION. EMBASSY EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS RECOGNIZED, AND COMMERCE-ORGANIZED SEMINAR OR VISIT OF HIGH-LEVEL EXECUTIVES WOULD BE INTENDED TO ASSIST THESE FIRMS BY BUILDING MOMENTUM TOWARD FAVORABLE DECISIONS BY THE NIGERIANS.

3. MOFFATT WAS NONCOMMITAL, SAID CHEMICO WOULD OF COURSE CONSIDER THE IDEA WHEN IT IS PRESENTED BY DOC. DEGHETTO AND FIELDING SAID AN OFFICIAL MISSION MIGHT DIFFUSE THE GOOD WILL AND EXPERIENCE THEY HAVE BEEN PAINSTAKINGLY BUILDING UP IN

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 01309 150802Z

NIGERIA, AND, FROM THE COMPETITIVE POINT OF VIEW, THEY WOULD

FRANKLY PREFER THAT IT NOT TAKE PLACE. THES HASTENED TO ADD
THAT, IF SUCH A MISSION IS IN FACT ORGANIZED, THEY COULD
PROBABLY NOT AFFORD TO BE EXCLUDED.

4. COMMENT: IN FURTHER CONTACTS WITH THESE GENTLEMEN, DOC
IS REQUESTED NOT TO QUOTE BACK TO THEM THEIR OFF-THE-CUFF
REMARKS TO EMBASSY. THEY ARE OFFERED HERE IN ORDER TO FOREWARN
DOC ABOUT THE KIND OF REACTION WHICH MAY BE EXPECTED FROM SOME
US FIRMS (SEE LAGOS 1239 FOR PARTIAL LIST). IF MANY REASON
LIKE FOSTER WHEELER, ONE DIFFICULTY MAY BE KEEPING THE
MISSION TO A MANAGEABLY SMALL SIZE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, BUSINESSMEN, LPG, SALES, PERSONNEL TRAINING, ENERGY, CHEMICALS, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), TRADE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LAGOS01309
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740233/aaaabeot.tel
Line Count: 73
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LAGOS 1181
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <04-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ENERGY: PETROCHEMICAL TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR
TAGS: ENRG, NI
To: n/a
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005